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ABSTRACT

Since the start of the second Five Year Plan (1969-74) in Tanzania, the national focus has been on developing and extending adult education (largely literacy) in general, and rural programs in particular. Systematic program evaluation is needed so that scarce human and financial resources can be used effectively without needless duplication of past efforts and mistakes. The work oriented literacy project launched at Mwanza in 1967 is presently the only place in Tanzania where large scale evaluation of adult education activities is occurring. However, the Institute of Adult Education at the University of Dar es Salaam has begun evaluating the operation of the "Uchaguzi ni wako" radio citizen education study groups, together with provisions for adult educator training and the problems these educators encounter in the field. Irregular attendance and high dropout rates are a major weakness in literacy teacher training programs; failure of adult education in general to attract youth is another problem. There is evidence that adult education can be most easily organized within a framework of existing village systems and social relationships; and that literacy education is not necessarily a prerequisite for rural adult education. (Six references are included.) (LY)

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EVALUATION OF ADULT EDUCATION IN TANZANIA

A STATUS REPORT

PRESENTED AT THE

1970 UNIVERSITIES OF EAST AFRICA SOCIAL SCIENCE CONFERENCE

Dar es Salaam, December 27th - 31st

By

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The importance of adult education in the development of an independent, socialist Tanzania does not need a great deal of elucidation. Since the introduction of the Second Five Year Plan (1969 - 1974) with Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere's call that "First, we must educate adults", [1] to the declaration of 1970 as the year of adult education and the subsequent reorganization of the Ministry of National Education to coordinate national adult education, the national focus has been on the development and extension of educational programmes for adults in general and rural adults in particular. In August of 1970 there were over 261,000 adults enrolled in the adult education classes organized on subjects ranging from political education and literacy to agriculture and carpentry. The importance of education for adults has been seen and acted upon from the meeting places in remote villages to the work stands of the factories of Dar es Salaam.

One does not have to elaborate on the importance of continued growth and success of such of the various adults education activities in Tanzania. This is a time when a great many new approaches will be tried. Experiments will be initiated as areas with limited prior experience are given to the opportunities to participate in various kinds of adult education activities. It is a time when all people at all levels of the adult education process will be learning. The primary or secondary school teacher who is now involved in teaching adults, the District Education Officers who coordinate differing activities and officials in the Ministry of National Education all will be learning side by side with the cotton farmer in Mwanza who learns to grow better cotton as he learns to read and write.

At a time such as this, it becomes clear that a need for evaluation of adult education programmes exists. The results of today's emphasis on adult education depends on limited financial resources and on still more limited human resources. Both of these scarce resources are compounded by a scarcity of time. The development of a democratic socialist nation awaits the success of present efforts. The task then becomes one of maximizing the success of existing programmes and eliminating those which do not meet expectations. Now is the time to work together, learning from the mistakes and the successes of others. We must not condemn ourselves to individual reinvention of the wheel.

It should also be noted that Tanzania is not alone in needing the application of systematic evaluation to its programmes. The Sir Robert Jackson Report on The Capacity of the United Nations in the Development of Nations has pointed out that it is imperative that a consistent programme of evaluation be implemented if the second ten years of United Nations' assistance is to succeed where the first development decade failed. [2] The mistakes made by one development project have been repeated dozens of times over in other locations.

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1. Nyerere, Julius K. Address to Tanzania National Assembly on Launching of the Second Five Year Plan, 1969.
2. Jackson, Sir Robert. A Study of the United Nations Development System. Geneva: United Nations, 1969, paragraph 149, part 111.

We are at an important stage in the development of adult education in Tanzania. We do not have the massive machinery of the United Nations to change to another direction. We have a newer programme with fewer parts which can be watched in the early stages to make sure that it begins in the way that is most effective.

This plea for more evaluation does not mean that none has occurred to date nor that none is now being planned. In fact, for the main portion of this paper I would like to briefly discuss what has been done by the Work Oriented Literacy Project and the Institute of Adult Education, the nature of the evaluations, some of the findings, and to propose several suggestions for alleviating the problems.

The Present Position

The only place in Tanzania where large scale evaluation of adult education activities is taking place is with the work Oriented Literacy Project in Mwanza co-sponsored by the Tanzanian government, Unesco, and UNDP. The project which started in 1967 is scheduled to run through 1972. It is the task of the evaluation unit of the project to measure the impact of the literacy project in four areas in Tanzania's lake regions. The focus of the instructional programme of the project is the combining of literacy in Kiswahili, basic arithmetic skills and vocational skills for improved production of cash crops, principally cotton. This combination is characteristic of the Unesco functional literacy approach.

> The specific objective of the programme are:-
> "a. To teach illiterate men and women basic reading and writing, and to solve simple problems of arithmetic utilizing as basic vocabularies the words used in agriculture and industrial practices.
> b. To help them apply the new knowledge and skills to solve their basic economic, social and cultural problems.
> c. To prepare them for a more efficient participation in the development of their villages, region and country.
> d. To integrate the adult literacy and adult education programmes with the general agricultural and industrial development of the country.
> e. To provide the necessary and adequate reading materials to impart the knowledge of community and personal hygiene, nutrition, childcare, home economics, which will help to improve family and community life, to provide opportunity for a continuing education and avoid relapse in illiteracy."[3]

The task of evaluating the project has been broken down into several aspects:

1. baseline data, interim survey and technical survey
2. action oriented research or feedback

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3. UNDP/Tanzania Literacy Project. Report of Workshop on Evaluation Policy in June 1970. (mimeo),p.2.

The most important aspect of the evaluation scheme is the analysis of the original baseline study. The baseline was to provide the background for measuring the changes in the pilot areas and to provide for programme planning prior to the interim and terminal evaluation. To date, the data from the 1967 - 68 baseline study has not been analyzed, so that the needed data for comparison is not available. It is probable that the baseline study will not be completed by the time the interim evaluation is scheduled to begin in 1971.

Despite the problems that have resulted from attempts to measure the overall impact of the project, there have been several studies carried out by project personnel on a smaller scale of evaluation. These projects include a study of participants in the Busega sub-pilot area, [4] a test of illustrations for use in the primers and an evaluation report on training and performance of voluntary teachers. [5] Both the illustrations test and the study of adult learners provide some useful material to adult educators in other parts of Tanzania, while the evaluation of the teacher training and effectiveness has pointed out some of the weaknesses in the project that need to be modified and strengthened.

The overall position of the evaluation scheme was reviewed in a workshop in June 1970 in order to:

"a. structure a scientific evaluation policy.
b. find out ways and means by which this policy can best be realized." [6]

It might be pointed out, that three years after a project has been started is certainly time enough to begin thinking about evaluation policy. One cannot help but the critical of the UNDP/Unesco individuals who have allowed the problems to reach the point where objectives and goals for evaluating are still being sought 60% of the way through the project. It may be that the objectives of functional literacy have been sufficiently vague to prevent evaluation to function, it may be that personnel have shifted in and out of project so quickly that long-term planning has been difficult. It is hoped, however, that the useful information that has already come out of the project will be augmented in the near future with some data about overall impact of the project in the four lake regions.

As was mentioned before, the Institute of Adult Education has been also involved in activities which fall under the rubric of evaluation. The Institute has initiated an evaluation of the operation of radio study groups in connection with the Uchaguzi ni wako radio series and a study of the training of DEOs (Adult Education) and the problems they have encountered in the field. The Uchaguzi ni wako series was produced by the radio tutor at the Institute and provided broadcast material which supplements a book by the same title giving accurate information about the elections.

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4. Mbakile, E.P.R. Adult Learners. Mwanza: UNDP/Tanzania Literacy Project, 1970, mimeo.
5. Bhola, H.S. Literacy Teachers of Adults. Mwanza: UNDP/Tanzania Literacy Project, 1970.
6. UNDP/Tanzania Literacy Project. Report of Workshop on Evaluation Policy in 1970. mimeo, p.1.

The DEOs (AE) were selected at the beginning of 1970 for training at Kivukoni College. Their task under the new organization for adult education is coordinate and initiate adult education at the district level through-out Tanzania.

The question should be asked then, what have we learned about organizing adult education activities in Tanzania from these various beginnings? Are there common problems which showed up that might need some attention?

The evaluation of the Uchaguzi ni wako study groups has relied on four sources of information.

1. The analysis of weekly report forms from the various groups operating which includes data on attendance and those and those questions not understood on the broadcast itself.
2. The analysis of reports given every three weeks about the kinds of topics discussed in the meetings and general activities of the groups.
3. Detailed questionnaires of group leaders from a selected area about functioning of the groups.
4. Data from selected groups which answered factual questions before the series began again after the series had ended.

In combination with the above sources of information, a section of the voter level questionnaire of the 1970 election study includes questions concerning sources of information about the election plus possible participations in adult education groups and knowledge of the Uchaguzi ni wako series.

Drop-outs and irregular attendance

Of the several problems that have come out of these studies the one which occurs most often and is seen in all the reports is that of learners who are enrolled for a particular class or activity failing to attend class or attending only part-time. The survey of District Education Officers showed that aside from administrative problems concerning offices and transport, the most frequently problem was drop-outs or irregular attendance. [7] In Bhola's report on the training of literacy teachers he observed that of twenty enrolled for a class, ten may show up on any given day and the number staying the entire time may be four or five. [8]

Mbakile's more detailed study of the Busega sub-pilot area showed a drop in average monthly attendance of 128 learners in August 1968 to 65.4 in April 1969. [9] While the statistics themselves may have been somewhat unreliable as confusions arrises over what constitutes attendance early in the programme, the fact remains that a very high proportion of the learners failed to show up after some sessions. Elsewhere in this study a figure of 30% as a drop-out rate and 21% irregular attendance were given. [10]

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7. Hall, Budd L. and Haule, G.O. Preliminary Report on DEO (AE) Survey. Dar es Salaam: Institute of Adult Education, 1970, mimeo, p.2.
8. Bhola, H.S. p.46.
9. Mbakile, E.P.R. p.11.
10. IBID.

Failure of classes to attract youth

It should be pointed out that one does not expect to find as high a proportion of the youth in adult education classes, especially classes which are chiefly literacy. In the cases that have been studied to date, literacy classes have been in the overwhelming majority. The national figures of adult education classes showed in August 1970 that 63% of all adult education classes under the coordination of the DEOs (AE) were literacy only. The literacy project classes are obviously literacy with other skills added.

In spite of this fact, the Mwanza information has shown a virtual lack of young men participating in classes. Of those between the age of 15 - 25 only 16.67% were males. [11] The literacy classes in that area made up of mostly old men younger women.

When asked which groups of people were the most difficult to organize into adult education classes, the DEOs listed youth as most difficult with the very old coming second and the partially educated , a category which includes mostly the young, third. The very old said that they were to worn to learn anything new, and the young seem to have the feeling that these classes can be of little or no benefit to them.

Organizing adult education is easier when done with already operating organizations.

The DEO study revealed that 80% of the DEOs found that it was easier to organize adult education in Ujamaa villages, than in other locations. The resson most often given for this case of organization was the already existing structure and discipline in the village. The DEOs further said that among the various groups of people outside Ujamaa villages, the stable classes occurred when already existing groups of people such as teachers in a school or UWT organizations were enrolled for adult education.

The experience of the Uchaguzi ni wako study groups showed that many of the most stable groups had previously been organized for some other purpose and then were converted into radio listening groups at beginning of the series.

In the light of the findings that have come out of the modest studies to date, what might be done? Two suggestions are offered here and intend to serve only as stimulation to further thinking:

1. In the four lake regions, age-groups are very well developed and seem to involve most of the young men in the area. These age-groups seem to spend most the day with one another in farming, playing Ngomas, or talking. These are natural groups that already exist. They are not groups that would have to be artificially created as literacy or skills classes. It may be possible that these kinds of groups could be utilized to build adult education.

What about areas like Dar es Salaam where these kinds of groups do not exist? In all towns there are large numbers of football clubs which serve some of the same functions sociologically as the age-groups. Young men are together in groups doing things that they enjoy. They spend a great deal of time together talking about jobs, girls, opportunities and football. They might serve as potential groups for organization.

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11. IBID, p.8.

The point is that there are so many natural groups that already exist, it is pointless to start taking groups of a few old men, old women, young women, and young men and throwing them together in a heap and expecting them to find enough binding in the joy of learning to hold them together.

2. The overwhelming majority of adult education in Tanzania is literacy education. It is not at all proven that literacy should be the first step towards rural adult education. It could be that many skills are much better taught by an individual only demonstrating. But there does seem to be some agreement that the literate person is able to learn more on his own than the illiterate. If this is the case, we are still going about the business in an awkward manner. For example, if you want to begin an adult education programme in you district, the first task would be to find out what kinds of skills such as masonry, carpentry, simple metal working or bicycle repairing are needed. Next, a programme is started and the skills are seen to be immediately useful, not a promise for years to come. After they have begun to learn the skills, literacy can be introduced as the follow-up in order to improve on the skills learned in the basic course. In fact, if the course is popular, which it would be if properly planned, one wouldn't need to convince anyone. It would be an acceptable practice to make reading, writing and numbers a compulsory part of the other subjects. If one is to involve literacy, however, one should make sure that there is some kind of honest and useful information available in the books can be obtained that will help learners to improve the skills that they already have.

Evaluation to date has been meagre. The findings are not always clear but they are beginnings. There are several other areas of existing adult education which should have high priority in immediate plans. There should for example to be a systematic evaluation of the efforts of the Cooperative education Centre to educate primary society staff, committee members and members in matters effecting growth of successful cooperatives. The Cooperative Centre operates the largest adult education programme in Tanzania outside the Ministry of National Education. The latest statistics show that there are 800,000 members in the cooperative movement.

Another operation which would be beneficial to evaluate is the Lushoto Integrated Development Project in Soni. The project has begun a series of sixteen sub-projects all of which involve the education or training of adults in the area. From preliminary observations, it would seem that the project is remarkably successful in eliminating the problem of drop-outs which plagues many adult education enterprises. It can be done so by offering projects which are interesting, practical and profitable on a group basis.

An evaluation must also be done of the national programme coordinated by the Ministry of National Education. As was pointed out earlier, so much is resting on the success of the programme, that everything which can be done to clarify goals and measure effects is needed.

Finally it must be noted that there is much reason to be optimistic about the future of evaluation and research in adult education. Nationally and in individual programmes, a sense of responsibility and faith has been placed in evaluators and researchers. This trust must not be handled lightly.

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